LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 1715
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

Funeral Services Without Theology

A Series of Addresses Adapted to Various Occasions

F. J. Gould

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CONTENTS

Page

Preface 5

Addresses Suitable to—

Old Age 8

Middle Age 12

Youth 16

Childhood 20

Infancy 23

A General Form for All Ordinary Occasions 26

The Everlasting Memorial 32

FUNERAL SERVICES WITHOUT THEOLOGY

PREFACE

Having conducted many ceremonies of farewell to the dead, and knowing what need there is for a series of services adapted to various ages, I have ventured to draw upon my own experience in compiling the present collection. My invariable practice has been to include a reference to personal details of the career of the deceased. Wherever this course can be followed it is much to be preferred, and I have indicated a suitable place for such allusions in each of the special addresses for Old Age, Middle Age, Youth, Childhood and Infancy. But an emergency may arise when no opportunity is afforded for gathering the information from the lips of friends, or when time may not permit due preparation; and to meet such cases a service adapted to "all ordinary occasions" has been included.

The person officiating should be careful to read each address beforehand, and to modify or omit any expressions which would not apply to the deceased.

Any prose passage or any verse should be left out when brevity is desired, as, for instance, when the personal recollections extend to some length, or when inclement weather is encountered at the grave side.

I have sought to give the addresses a serene

and, at times, almost cheerful tone; and reflection and experience convince me that such a method is appreciated even by those who feel bereavement the most acutely.

To persons who may be called upon to officiate, but are not accustomed to the duty, I venture to offer hints and suggestions:

(1) If you think well to include personal references and are not familiar with the deceased's career, call upon a member of the family, ask the exact name and age, and ascertain what qualities were most prized and most tenderly remembered, and make sure that the personal allusions will not be considered out of place. I have never found the least difficulty in this respect.

(2) Accompany the party to and from the place of burial if they wish it.

(3) Where two chapels are provided, you will go to the Secular. It should be particularly observed that the Secular chapel is open to the use of mourners of Rationalist and Humanist views; and such is also the case in cemeteries where only one chapel exists. I have never met anything but courtesy.

(4) Stand and read at the minister's desk. But when the party is small, I have usually taken a position between the coffin and the mourners, in order to be better heard.

(5) Read slowly, and pause with deliberation between the sentences. If you do this, you will find the addresses given in the manual quite long enough, or that they require shortening, especially if personal recollections are inserted.

(6) On leaving the chapel, take your place last in the procession to the grave.

(7) In case of cremation arrange beforehand with the attendant as to some kind of quiet, unspoken sign at the point for the removal of the coffin.

E. J. Gould.

OLD AGE

The rich and the poor listen to the voice of death; the learned and the unlearned listen; the proud and the humble listen; the honest and the deceitful listen.

In the midst of our toil, our cares, our business, our pleasure, our folly, we all stop when we hear the whisper of death.

But when death speaks to us, what does it say? Death does not speak about itself. It does not say, "Fear me." It does not say, "Wonder at me." It does not say, "Understand me." But it says to us: "Think of life; think of the value of life; think of the work of life: think of the privilege of life; think how great a thing life may be made."

When we are in danger, we love the thought of safety; when we are in sorrow, we love the thought of joy; when we are in darkness we love the thought of light; and so, when we are in the presence of death, we are awakened to the thought of the meaning of life.

Oft-times men will not heed the preacher or the adviser, but none dares turn a deaf ear when death speaks with an awful gentleness that will not be denied.

In the house of death we are all serious; and we are ready then, if at no other time, to face the question: "What do I live for? Why do I go to and fro on the face of the earth? Why do I labor? and what is the highest and best thing that life can offer me?"

And when we thus reflect we see that there are things in the world that are mightier than death. Honor is mightier than death; for men and women will oft-times die rather than do that which is dishonorable. Justice is mightier than death; for men and women will oft-times die rather than act unjustly. Love is mightier than death; for men and women will oft-times die for the sake of one they love. Here, then, in the presence of death, our eyes behold the true value of things.

In this idealism of honor, justice, and love, our dear old friend..... was a believer. His (her) Church was the Church of humanity.

(*Here insert personal recollections.*)

This is the death that does not call for grief; and his (hers) was a life whose honesty needed no compliments.

The soul that loves and works will need no praise;
But, fed with sunlight and with morning breath,
Will make our common days eternal days,
And fearless greet the mild and gracious death.
—W. M. W. CALL.

As he (she) drew near the time of his (her) final weakness, and the evening of life was upon him (her), he (her) showed no leaning to the doctrine that talks all too easily of the terrors or the joys of an invisible world. He (she) held to the sober realities, and strained his (her) eyes after no remote visions.

So live
That, when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan that moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon; but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him and lies down to pleasant dreams.
—W. C. BRYANT.

The memory of our friend has passed into the vast society of the dead. With this society we are still in real and living connection. The noble qualities of the dead are active influences among us today, aiding in the progress towards the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, and helping us to shake off whatever may delay our march or stain our innermost self. We can imagine that our friend smiles even in death at the thought that his (her) life is yet a power that makes for righteousness on the earth. This hour and this place have solemn associations; but, in the midst of grave and serious thoughts, we have a cheerful consciousness that there is still a link of love and respect that will continue to bind us and our friend together.

And now we go forth with our dead that the spot where he (she) lies may be consecrated by our tender regard.

[In case of cremation, read:—
"And now our dead shall pass from sight: and fire, like a mighty and pure spirit, shall receive his (her) body, and presently leave but a few ashes as a relic of the form we loved. And within our hearts, serene and immovable, abides the recollection of his (her) life."]

At the Grave.

We commit the ashes of our beloved to the keeping of the mother earth, which bears us all.

[In case of cremation, after the disappearance of the coffin, read the first sentence:—
"We have committed our beloved to the flame which, with potent and kindly alchemy, will dissolve the body to its elements."]

We are glad that he (she) lived. We are glad that we saw his (her) face, and felt the pressure of his (her) hand. We cherish the memory of his (her) words and deeds and character.

And as we stand here we are reminded that life passes, and there pass with it so many opportunities of doing good.

To do good is our aim. The way of life is through justice, kindness, honesty. The way of death is through injustice, unkindness, insincerity. Let us therefore go hence and truly live:—

Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.

—H. Bonar.

We leave the ashes of our dead in peace. With respect we bid him (her) farewell. In love we remember his (her) long life, and our companionship with him (her). And, thus thinking of him (her), let us go in quietness

of spirit, and live in charity one with the other.

MIDDLE AGE

When we gather in this chapel to express, in spoken words or in silence, full of tenderness, our farewell to our dear friend....., we meet in solemnity, but not in despair; in quiet submission to that which needs must be, but not with unwholesome thoughts of death, or mean thoughts of life. We can meet here without disturbing our minds by terrible images. We speak not mournfully of the flesh which is as grass and withers, or of the flower which blooms gloriously and then falls away. We may, indeed, perceive a tragic beauty in the sigh of the ancient Hebrew Psalmist:—

> The days of our age are threescore years and ten, and, though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is their strength then but labor and sorrow, so soon passeth it away and we are gone.

But if that dark temper should be ours at certain moments, we know how to rise above it. We can attain to the braver spirit which, even in the face of death, thinks of the meaning and worth of life. We prefer the beautiful words of Spinoza: "The free man thinks of nothing so little as of death, and his wisdom is a meditation, not of death, but of life."

A great Roman, Marcus Aurelius, who was both wise and good, said: "The residue of life

is short." But he did not say this in sorrow, as if he felt that a short life must be overcast by the shadow of death. He made no moan at the coming of death, which is as natural as the coming of sleep. Having said, "The residue of life is short," he at once added the bold words:—

> Live as on a mountain. It matters not whether here or there; everywhere you are a citizen of the city of the world. Let men see and witness a true man.

And in the same fine spirit he addressed these words to such as felt the burden and stress of life:—

> If you find yourself falling away and beaten in the fight, be a man and get away to some quiet corner, where you can still hold on, or in the last resort take leave of life, not angrily, but simply, freely, modestly, achieving at least this much in life—brave leaving of it.

And thus he would have us learn that the mere living or dying should not concern us; but our concern should be that we should behave ourselves with courage and uprightness. In tender recollection, we call to mind the character and work of our dear friend, who has become more precious to us through death.

(*Here insert personal recollections.*)

As we recall his (her) character, his (her) deeds, his (her) words, his (her) influence,

can we rightly say that he (she) is dead? Has he (she) not rather become transfigured to our thought—no longer, indeed, a visible partner in the daily labor and converse, but still a real member of the social circle; peaceful and apart, and yet still an element of our life and love and sorrow? His (her) being is still a part of ours. The noblest part of his (her) nature still endures in our own.

I hold it true, whate'er befall,
I feel it when I sorrow most,
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

—TENNYSON.

What's done is what remains. Ah! blessèd they
Who leave completed tasks of love to stay
And answer mutely for them, being dead;
Life was not purposeless, though life be fled.

Undisturbed by the noisy traffic of the day, our friend's image now dwells with us, serene, painless, passionless; encouraging us to quit ourselves with bravery and goodwill. He (she) will still live where he (she) would choose, above all things, to live—in the temple of our kind and reverent memory.

And now we go forth with the ashes of our dead, that the spot where he (she) lies may be consecrated by our tender regard.

[In case of cremation read:

"And now our dead shall pass from sight, and fire, like a mighty and pure spirit, shall receive his (her) body, and presently leave but a few ashes as a relic of the form we loved. And within our hearts, calm and immovable, abides the recollection of his (her) life."]

At the Grave.

We commit our beloved to the keeping of the mother earth, which bears us all.

[In case of cremation, after the disappearance of the coffin, read the first sentence:
"We have committed our beloved to the flame which, with potent and kindly alchemy, will dissolve the body to its simple elements."]

We are glad that we saw his (her) face, and felt the pressure of his (her) hand. We cherish the memory of his (her) words and deeds and character.

And as we stand here we are reminded that life passes, and there pass with it so many opportunities of doing good.

"The world is our country, mankind are our brethren, and to do good is our religion."

In the service of man we best prepare ourselves for a death that shall come gently as a friend.

There is no death, though earthly lives depart;
'Mid changing forms a secret strength remains;
All work endures, strong mind and noble heart
Touch to fine issues nobler hearts and brains.

—W. M. W. Call.

We leave our dead in peace. With respect we bid him (her) farewell. In love we remember his (her) life and his (her) companionship. And thus thinking of him (her) let us go in quietness of spirit, and live in charity one with the other.

YOUTH

We grieve most for the passing of the young. If the old depart, we recognize a natural change, as when the sunset dissolves into the dusk and the stars come out in the deepening blue. But the death of youth shocks us as if the morning were suddenly overcast and the day suffered a dreadful eclipse.

This very grief is a token that death cannot take from us the most precious of our treasures —namely, Love. It is the tear of love that flows the fullest, the pain of love that aches the deepest, the thoughts of love that move most actively. Other passions have their tears and pains; but none are so keen in their sense of loss as love is. For love is of the very essence of the human heart; and when we are deprived of the friend (child) we love our innermost self seems rent in twain, and life is only a part of what it was, and the world is dull and gray, as if it were to be clad in twilight evermore. All these things are signs of the sacred strength of love.

And if love be so strong to grieve, it can also be strong to grasp what neither death nor time can remove from our hearts. Neither death nor time can steal from us the happiness of offering love to the memory of the dear friends whom we shall never again see as once we saw. They are yet companions with us.

And still their silent ministry
Within my heart hath place,
As when on earth they walked with me
And met me face to face.

Their lives are made forever mine;
What they to me have been
Hath left henceforth its seal and sign
Engraven deep within.

—F. L. Hosmer.

The intense feeling of love that grieves for the young shows that nature itself is teaching us to keep hold of something that is truly worth the keeping. For of all memories the memory of the young has the sweetest influence. The recollection of the aged dead may indeed be blessed, but it is associated with the idea of decline and decay. The recollection of the dead who have left us in their prime may also be blessed, but it is perhaps linked with a record of sorrowful struggle, of painful battle of hardship and disappointment. But the image of the young dead is clear from stains and defects that come later, and it stands out in the light and beauty of early promise. Such memories are as needful to a complete humanity as are the memories of the mature and manly (womanly) character. They are the springtime pictures in the galleries of the mind. They repeat to us the sound of young voices. They come to us as a breeze of the morning, and they gleam like the dew at sunrise. They make us more wholesome in our judgment of humanity, and preserve a tenderness of sentiment which ennobles our own inner self and extends a glad effect to the lives of others. A grief that makes us purer and

sweetens our social relationships is sacred in its very agony. Love plants its flowers in the soil of pain.

> Come, Love, sweet human Love, O come!
> This is thy part;
> 'Tis thou must fill the mourning home,
> The mourner's heart.
>
> —V. LUSHINGTON.

With hearts subdued by this sense of the lofty service which sorrow itself may render to us, we have gathered here to say farewell to our beloved.....

(*Here insert personal recollections.*)

There is no sorer trial than that of loneliness. We think with profound pity of the desolation of the man or woman who dies alone. Our .....never had to bear this burden. In his (her) time of sickness he (she) could look up into eyes that gazed into his (hers) with affection. Here, even at the last, we surround him (her) as with a circle of love and tenderness. So strong is sympathy in the human heart that death itself only gives occasion for its fresh exercise. For in the midst of sadness the social spirit asserts itself. We join our sorrows together; we are comrades in the bitterness of tears; we find society in our suffering; and if the way for the moment seems dark, we are fellow-travellers.

> O deem not that earth's crowning bliss
> Is found in joy alone;
> For sorrow, bitter though it be,
> Hath blessings all its own.

And now we go forth with our dead, that the spot where he (she) lies may be consecrated by our tender regard.

[In case of cremation, read:
"And now our dead shall pass from sight, and fire, like a mighty and pure spirit, shall receive his (her) body, and presently leave but a few ashes as a relic of the form we loved. And within our hearts, serene and immovable, abides the recollection of his (her) life."]

At the Grave.

We commit the body of our beloved to the keeping of the mother earth, which bears us all.

[In case of cremation, after the disappearance of the coffin, read the first sentence:
"We have committed our beloved to the flame, which, with potent and kindly alchemy, will dissolve the body to its simplest elements."]

We are glad that he (she) lived. We are glad that we saw his (her) face, and felt the pressure of his (her) hand. We cherish the memory of his (her) words and deeds and character.

In token of our love for the young life that has untimely faded, we will resolve to offer a more generous service, so far as we are able, to the young children of humanity the world over.

As blossoms smitten by the rain
  Their sweetest odors yield;
As where the plough has deepest struck,
  Rich harvests crown the field.

So to the hopes by sorrow crushed
  A nobler faith succeeds;
And life, by trials furrowed, bears
  The fruit of loving deeds.

We leave our dead in peace. With affection we bid him (her) farewell. In love we remember his (her) life. And thus thinking of him (her), let us go hence in quietness of spirit, and live in charity one with the other.

CHILDHOOD

Today is a day of sorrow; a day when we look at each other through our tears; a day when a little chair is empty, a little voice is hushed, a little face missing from the household; and.....lives with us only in our thoughts, and in the affection which will move our innermost selves until the last pulse of our own life has throbbed.

Now, who shall help us bear this sorrow? And what wisdom shall enable us to see things beautiful even in the hour of death?

The secret of our strength lies in this: that for.....(*here insert age*)—the whole short lifetime of this dear child—we gave him (her) our love; and in giving him (her) our love we made ourselves stronger. For in all the wide world, in land and ocean, in the immeasurable air and starry sky, there is nothing so wonderful, nothing so noble, nothing so mighty, as Love. To love a fellow creature, even for a day, makes our nature more fine and pure; but to love a child, a man, a woman, for many days, for months, for years —this it is which builds up the better part of our being. For the sweet magic which will sustain us in the day of sorrow we need not

go to a book, or priest, or church. We may find it in the depth of our own nature. The being that has been consecrated by the presence of love is capable of passing through the valley of the shadow, and remaining brave, manly, womanly. We loved this child; and such love is the source of grace and power.

Death is not our master. No sorrow can ever be so great, so beautiful, as human courage, human patience, human love. Even if sorrow wounds us, the courage which faces it is nobler than the force that strikes. Even if sorrow wrings from us the cry of pain, the patience which bears it is nobler than the force that oppresses. Even if sorrow takes away our sunlight and starlight, the love which warms our stricken hearts for this dear child is nobler than the force that puts this darkness round us.

Are we here in the presence of death? Ay, but we are in the presence of greater things than death. Our little.....has been taken from us. But is this tragedy the only fact that confronts us? No, not at all. First, we should think of the child's love for his (her) companions, the love that swelled his (her) heart towards the parents who tended him (her), and kept sad vigils in his (her) time of need. We should think, also, of the courage, patience, and love of the father and the mother. Always in a household there will come gusts of passion, shadows of ill-temper and selfishness, unhappy moments when the cares of business make the world seem nothing better than a place of merchandise, greed, and cun-

ning. But inspiration enters the house when our hearts are chastened by courage, patience, and love; and then a lamp is lit amid the darkness, and our bread is eaten in peace and mutual kindness.

(*Here insert personal recollections.*)

Child-life is one of the purest blessings enjoyed by humanity. Would that every human commonwealth cherished this child-life more effectively, and more earnestly guarded it from pain, sickness, and mishap. We who have been hurt by the loss of this cherished one may discover a measure of consolation in helping every wise precaution, every protecting agency, every social movement that makes for the joy, health, and hope of the children upon whom the future of our race depends.

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air for food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood—

That to the world are children;
Through them it feels the glow
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

—LONGFELLOW.

Though now we carry this dear child to the quiet earth, we shall not bury our love. In love we nursed him (her) and cherished him (her); in love we gave him (her) little gifts, and sent him (her) to school, and dreamed of his (her) possible future. In love, also, we go forth with him (her) that the place where he (she) lies may be sanctified by our tenderest respect.

At the Grave.

We give back this little body to the great mother which bears us all.

There is not a wide difference between the years of a child and the years of an old man. One has beheld the sun a few more times than the other; but in the passing of the ages the life of the child and the life of the veteran are not far apart. If, then, our life is brief, let us see to it that we walk its short way in charity.

In this spirit, and mindful of the idealism which consists in doing good, we take our leave of our little friend.

He (she) blessed us with his (her) smiles; we bless him (her) for the happiness he (she) gave us.

Farewell, dear..... The thought of you will be like a deathless flower in the garden of our heart. Through storm and shadow the memory of your face will ever shine. Your memory will keep our hearts more fresh, our hands more pure, our life more just.

And so long as our hearts shall beat, we love you.

INFANCY

The rich and the poor listen to the voice of death; the learned and the unlearned listen; the proud and the humble listen; the honest and the deceitful listen; the old and the young listen. In the midst of our toil, our cares, our business, our pleasure, our folly, we all stop when we hear the whisper of death, even though it comes to us from the infant's cot.

But when death speaks to us, what does it say? Death does not speak about itself. It does not say, "Fear me." It does not say, "Wonder at me." It does not say, "Understand me." But it says to us: "Think of life; think of the value of life; think of the work of life; think of the privilege of life; think how great a thing life may be made." When we are in danger, we love the thought of safety; when we are in sorrow, we love the thought of joy; when we are in darkness, we love the thought of light; and so, when we are in the presence of death, we are awakened to the thought of the meaning of life. Oft-times men will not heed the preacher or the adviser, but none dares turn a deaf ear when death speaks with an awful gentleness that will not be denied. In the house of death we are all serious; and we are ready then, if at no other time, to face the question: "What do I live for? Why do I go to and fro on the face of the earth? Why do I labor? and what is the highest and best thing that life can offer me?"

And when we thus reflect, we see that there are things in the world that are mightier than death. Honor is mightier than death; for men and women will oft-times die rather than do that which is dishonorable. Justice is mightier than death; for men and women will oft-times die rather than act unjustly. Love is mightier than death; for men and women will oft-times die for the sake of one they love. Here, then, in the presence of death, our eyes behold the true value of things.

In the name of this ideal of honor, justice,

and love we take leave of this frail offspring of humanity..... His (her) tiny life flickered in our household for but .....(*name the age*), and then it gleamed no more. Scarcely had he (she) come to meet our smiles when he (she) left us, soft as a sigh, gentle as a shadow. He (she) opened his (her) eyes upon the world, saw a few faces that looked with love and hope upon his (her) infancy, and then passed away—never to experience the joys and trials of manhood (womanhood); never to struggle as we struggle; or to appreciate the deep problems of life as we appreciate them. Love did all it could to soothe his (her) brief suffering; love blessed him (her) as he (she) lay sleeping or awake; love brooded over him (her) as he (she) breathed the last baby breath.

[*Here insert any personal note.*]

We may fail to read the complete meaning of life, but we know that the finest thing on earth is the affection of the family (parents) which watches over the young lives, and cares for them, in sunshine or in darkness, until death draws the coverlet and tells love that all it may do now is to remember.

And now we go forth with our dead, that the spot where he (she) lies may be consecrated by our tender recollection.

At the Grave.

We commit this little body to the keeping of the mother earth, which bears us all.

This child came to us for what seemed but

a few moments, but in that swift passage he (she) asked and received the noblest of gifts—our love.

Earth's greatest gift is love,
And sweetest prize to win;
Treasure all else above,
Source of true life within.
O love, sweet love, with us abide;
In life, in death, be thou our guide.
—E. RODD.

We leave our dead in peace. In compassion and affection we bid him (her) farewell. And thus thinking of him (her), let us go in quietness of spirit, and live in charity one with the other.

A GENERAL FORM

Suitable for All Ordinary Occasions.[1]

"The whole succession of men during the ages should be considered as One Man, ever living and always learning."
—PASCAL.

"I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good work, therefore, I can do or show to any fellow-creature let me do it now! Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."
—WILLIAM PENN.

We assemble in this place to say a kind and solemn farewell to the remains of.....

We come as mourners. But the act of mourning is no strange event in human life. Not only do we grieve at the passing of friends.

---

[1]Passages from this address may be added to any of the preceding forms. The paragraphs and poetical quotations are so arranged that, if desired, any may be omitted without impairing the effect of the reading.

We may often have occasion to grieve over lost opportunities, or lost wealth, or lost health. And whenever a loss brings sorrow, it is our part not simply to mourn, but also to turn the affliction to some wise purpose in our life's experience. In death, therefore, we seek to find a meaning that shall bring consolation, and enable us to draw a hidden joy from the depth of sorrow. And this joy we discover in the thought that the living and the dead make up one vast family. Memory and love unite us to the departed in sacred ties. A household may be divided among various chambers, and the members, though parted by walls, may yet dwell in real union and sympathy. And so, also, we who live in the light of the sun and stars are yet comrades of the dead, bearing their image in our thought, their names on our lips, or their influences in our very blood and ideas and habits.

May we in blest communion live
With those whose work is done;
For all true children of our race,
Living and dead, are one.
—C. WESLEY.

Life is but the latest note in a music that began with the birth of humanity itself. The music is a song of households knit in the bonds of mutual love; of cities and states built up by courage and self-devotion; of benefits bestowed by wit and labor for the aid of the weak and helpless; of knowledge won from nature; of precious thoughts and teachings imparted by the sages. How immense and how deep is our debt to the past! How much of thankfulness we owe to the goodness, the intelligence,

and the energy of men and women who are now dead, and who toiled in faith and patience for the children of their day, and for us remoter children whom they were never to look upon! How few of these forefathers and foremothers can we know as we knew the dead to whom we here offer our parting words! Yet we derive from them our health, our stores of sustenance, our learning, our all. It is one of our profoundest joys to know that we are united to this great past. "To live with the dead is one of the most precious privileges of humanity."[1]

They cannot die whose lives are part
Of that one life which is to be,
Whose hearts beat with the world's great heart,
And joy in its high destiny.
—MALCOLM QUIN.

Each one of us can help in the glorious task of rendering some service to the family which numbers more members dead than living. Each can offer an impulse of pity, of mercy, of justice. Each can add a useful thought, a cheerful and sensible word, a happy song, an effort to express something beautiful. Each can contribute a little bravery, a little wisdom, a little aim accomplished. And, by reason of that little tribute to the general wealth, we may enroll ourselves among the influences that will pass from age to age in fruitfulness and blessing.

O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,

---

[1]Auguste Comte.

In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.
So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world.

—GEORGE ELIOT.

The reflection must occur to each of us that our hands have often hurt a fellow-creature; our words wounded a fellow-soul; our neglect left some benefit unrealized. These things done or undone we rightly regret. But if we sometimes droop at such memories, we ought also to brace our being with the assurance that we may just as certainly be forces for good. In strict and unerring consequence, one act of kindness, of sincerity, of self-denial at any moment of our experience, will have its gracious effect on the general welfare. No matter how modest our station, how small our power, we may leave a token of love to those that come after.

O might I leave behind
Some blessing for my fellows, some fair trust,
To guide, to cheer, to elevate my kind,
When I am in the dust.
Death would be sweeter then,
More calm my slumber 'neath the silent earth,
Might I thus live to bless my fellow-men
In new and glorious birth.

—H. F. LYTE.

There is the strongest comfort in a faith which believes in the immortality of goodness once expressed in word or deed. We believe that a right act, once performed, will live in

the character of future children of humanity when the hand that did it has long since ceased to ply its work.

In death there is no fear;
There's radiance in the gloom,
While love and hope are here,
The angels of the tomb.
—S. F. ADAMS.

If ever we are inclined to murmur at the destiny that crosses the light of life with the shadow of death, let us check ourselves with the reminder that, whether in life or death, we may be units in a grand host; happy warriors in one struggle for the True, the Beautiful, and the Good; servants of love, order, and progress; children of one humanity.

In the spirit of fellowship with the past and the future, the departed who rest, and those that are yet to live and labor, we go forth with our dead, that the spot where he (she) lies may be consecrated by our tender regard.

[In case of cremation, read:
"And now our dead shall pass from sight, and fire, like a mighty and pure spirit, shall receive his (her) body, and presently leave but a few ashes as a relic of the form we knew (loved).
"And within our hearts, serene and immovable, abides the recollection of his (her) life."]

At the Grave.[1]

We commit this body to the keeping of the mother earth, which bears us all.

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[1]Omit any or all of the poetical quotations if brevity is desired.

[In case of cremation, after the disappearance of the coffin, read the first sentence:
"We have committed our dead to the flame which, with potent and kindly alchemy, will dissolve the body into its simple elements."]

So be my passing,
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet West,
The sundown splendid and serene—
Death.

—W. E. HENLEY.

One more is added to the memories that people the past. We gladly and thankfully affirm that our existence is one with theirs, just as it is linked with the generations yet to come.

O sacred host of noble dead
Who, constant through the years,
In patience toiled, in patience sought,
Who wept immortal tears;
Deep in the shadow of your lives
We live and move today;
May we from your great past derive
A strength to work alway.

—E. B. HARRISON.

Beyond the gloom of the moment, we see the glorious oneness of humanity—on the one side of this life, the noble figures of the past; on the other, the children of the coming ages for whom we shall help to prepare the earth.

We are brethren of the dead, and comrades of the beings that yet shall live. We will console our hearts with the thought of this great company into which we are born, and in which our best work and influence will ever remain. And in this spirit of fellowship with past and

future, let us go hence in peace, and live in charity one with the other.[1]

THE EVERLASTING MEMORIAL

Up and away, like the dew of the morning,
  Soaring from earth to its home in the sun;
So let me steal away, gently and lovingly,
  Only remembered by what I have done.
My name and my place and my tomb all forgotten,
  The brief race of time well and patiently run,
So let me pass away, peacefully, silently,
  Only remembered by what I have done.
Not myself, but the truth that in life I have spoken,
  Not myself, but the seed that in life I have sown,
Shall pass on to the ages—all about me forgotten,
  Save the truth I have spoke and the things I have done.
So let my living be, so be my dying,
  So let my name lie, unblazoned, unknown,
Unpraised and unmissed, I shall still be remembered;
  Yes, but only remembered by what I have done.

—HORATIUS BONAR.

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[1]In place of the last sentence the following aspiration, expressive of the Idealism of Humanity, may be read:

May faith in humanity teach us how to live!
May hope in humanity strengthen us in need!
May love for humanity fill our hearts, giving peace within us, and with all men.

—FREDERIC HARRISON.